

Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3530

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 19800

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DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO EMBASSIES PARIS AND LONDON

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, NATO
SUBJECT: FOUR POWER TALKS ON SALT

REF: BONN 19688

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE GERMANS WANT TO USE
THE UPCOMING SALT CONSULTATIONS NOT SO MUCH TO REACH
SUBSTANTIVE AGREEMENT ON ANY PARTICULAR DISARMAMENT
ISSUE BUT TO INITIATE A PROCESS OF CONSULTATIONS. FROM
CONVERSATIONS HERE, IT IS CLEAR THAT THEY WANT TO LEARN
US DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATING POSITIONS IN ADVANCE RATHER
THAN TO BE BRIEFED AFTER OUR TALKS WITH THE SOVIETS.
HOWEVER, THE GERMANS DO NOT AT THIS POINT APPEAR TO HAVE
ANY FIXED NOTIONS ON THE SUBSTANCE AND FORM OF FUTURE
TALKS WITH THE SOVIET UNION, AND IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT THEY
WILL DEVELOP ANY BETWEEN NOW AND THE MINISTERIAL. END
SUMMARY.

1. THE POLITICAL DIRECTOR OF THE FRG FOREIGN OFFICE,
KLAUS BLECH, AND THE CHIEF OF THE POLITICAL-MILITARY
OFFICE AT THE FRG DEFENSE MINISTRY, GENERAL BRANDT,
TOLD THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR TODAY THAT THEY WERE
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APPROACHING THE BRUSSELS CONSULTATIONS WITH NO FIXED
IDEAS ABOUT THE WAY FUTURE DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS
SHOULD BE STRUCTURED. BRANDT SAID THAT THE GERMANS HAD
STILL NOT COMPLETED THEIR OWN PAPERS DEALING WITH THE
RELATIONS BETWEEN SALT, MBFR AND "GRAY AREA".
NEGOTIATIONS. HE INTIMATED THAT THEY HAD NO EXPEC-
TATION OF COMPLETING THE PAPER SOON.

2. TURNING TO THE PURPOSE OF THE UPCOMING QUADRIPARTITE CONSULTATIONS, BRANDT SAID THAT IT SEEMED TO HIM THAT THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT GERMAN OBJECTIVE IN THOSE CONSULTATIONS WOULD BE TO OBTAIN FOUR-POWER AGREEMENT THAT THE VARIOUS DISARMAMENT ISSUES ARE LINKED. HE SAID THE FRG WOULD NOT EXPECT TO REACH AGREEMENT ON HOW THOSE LINKS COULD BEST BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION IN OUR NEGOTIATING FORMULAS.

3. BRANDT ADDED THAT THE GERMANS REGARDED SOME ISSUES AS MORE URGENT AND IMPORTANT THAN OTHERS. FOR EXAMPLE, HE THOUGHT THE GERMANS WOULD BE MOST INTERESTED IN COMMON DISCUSSION OF SALT II AND SALT III AS WELL AS OF THE STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES LINKING THOSE TWO NEGOTIATIONS. OF LESSER URGENCY, HE THOUGHT, WERE SUCH ITEMS AS THE "GRAY AREAS" AND THE ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPON.

4. BLECH EXPRESSED A SIMILAR FEELING. HE SAID THAT, OF THE TALKING POINTS ACCOMPANYING THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT, THE FRG WAS MOST INTERESTED IN THE QUESTION OF PRINCIPLES FOR THE SALT TALKS. THEY ALSO ARE CONCERNED, BLECH SAID, ABOUT THE NON-CIRCUMVENTION, NON-TRANSFER PROBLEM, ALTHOUGH HE MADE NO SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS ABOUT IT.

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5. BRANDT SAID THERE WOULD BE A MEETING OF THE FEDERAL SECURITY COUNCIL TODAY. HE SAID THE MEETING HAD BEEN SCHEDULED EARLIER BUT WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY DISCUSS THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER. IT SHOULD ALSO TRY TO REACH AGREEMENT ON THE CHANCELLOR'S RESPONSE TO THAT LETTER. HOWEVER, HE SAID IT WAS NOT AT ALL CERTAIN THAT THE GERMAN STAFFING HAD PROCEEDED TO THE POINT WHERE A REPLY COULD BE DRAFTED.

6. FROM VARIOUS COMMENTS, IT WAS ALSO CLEAR THAT NEITHER BRANDT NOR BLECH HAVE ANY FIXED NOTIONS ABOUT WHETHER THE "GRAY AREA" NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE HANDLED IN A SEPARATE CHANNEL OR INCLUDED IN SALT OR MBFR. BLECH SAID HE THOUGHT MBFR WOULD BE BAD BECAUSE OF THE AREA LIMITATIONS OF THE NGA, BUT HE HAD NO SPECIFIC IDEAS OF HOW TO HANDLE THE TALKS.

7. COMMENT: THE GERMANS, IN ADDRESSING THESE DISARMAMENT ISSUES, ARE WRESTLING WITH COMPLEXITIES OUTSIDE THEIR OWN FAMILIAR THINKING. THEY FELT COMFORTABLE SO LONG AS SALT I DEALT ONLY WITH CENTRAL STRATEGIC SYSTEMS AND EXCLUDED FBS. AS SALT II BEGAN TO TOUCH ON WHAT THEY PERCEIVED AS THEIR MORE DIRECT INTERESTS -- ESPECIALLY IN THE AREA OF CRUISE MISSILES --

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THEY FOUND THEMSELVES CONTEMPLATING RELATIONSHIPS THAT THEY HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED. EVEN THE NPG DISCUSSIONS, WIDE-RANGING AS THEY MAY BE, HAVE NOT FULLY PREPARED THE GERMANS TO APPRECIATE ALL THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE ISSUES WE NOW FACE.

8. MOREOVER, THE GERMANS STILL SHOW A CERTAIN DEFERENCE TO US IN ADDRESSING STRATEGIC MATTERS. THEY CLEARLY DO NOT WANT TO BLOCK SALT AND THEY RECOGNIZE THE PRIMACY OF OUR STRATEGIC INTERESTS. THIS ADDS TO THEIR UNCERTAINTY IN COMING UP WITH ANSWERS TO ISSUES THEY HAVE THEMSELVES POSED.

9. IT COULD BE SAID, THOUGH WE ARE NOT SURE IT WILL REMAIN SO, THAT THE GERMANS MAY NOT KNOW WHAT THEY WANT BUT THEY DEFINITELY KNOW WHAT THEY DO NOT

WANT. THEY DO NOT WANT TO FIND THAT THE EUROPEAN BALANCE
IS AFFECTED BY NEGOTIATIONS IN WHICH THEY PLAY NO ROLE
OR IN WHICH THEY HAVE NO VOICE.

10. AS AN ILLUSTRATION OF THIS, THE GERMANS HAVE NOT
BEEN ABLE TO OFFER US ANY CLEAR SUGGESTIONS, EVEN AT THE
WORKING AND PLANNING LEVEL, WHETHER THEY FAVORED
INTRODUCING THE "GRAY AREA" SYSTEMS INTO SALT, MBFR, OR
A THIRD VENUE. HOWEVER, THEY HAVE MADE ABUNDANTLY
CLEAR THAT THEY NO LONGER WISH TO SEE ANY OF THESE
NEGOTIATIONS TREATED IN ISOLATION FROM THE OTHERS.

11. SUBJECT TO WHATEVER MAY EMERGE FROM TODAY'S
FEDERAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING, ON WHICH WE HOPE TO
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REPORT BEFORE THE MINISTERIAL, THIS SUGGESTS THAT THE
MOST EFFECTIVE U.S. REPRESENTATION AT THE QUADRIPARTITE CON-
SULTATIONS WOULD BE A BROAD EXPLANATION OF THE DIRECTION
IN WHICH WE WANT TO GO COUPLED WITH ANY SPECIFICS WE MAY
HAVE ELABORATED ON HOW THE VARIOUS ARMS NEGOTIATIONS
ARE LINKED IN OUR OWN MINDS. WE WOULD NOT EXPECT THAT
THE FRG WOULD OPPOSE OUR OWN FORMULAS BUT WOULD IN
THE FIRST INSTANCE GENERALLY BE INCLINED TO ACCEPT THEM
TO THE DEGREE TO WHICH THEY OFFERED AVENUES FOR COMMON
CONSULTATION.

12. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR, AND MAY NOT BE FOR SOME TIME,
WHETHER THE FRG WISHES TO SHARE IN THE RESPONSIBILITY
FOR FORMULATING SPECIFIC POSITIONS OR REACHING SPECIFIC
DECISIONS. OUR IMPRESSION AT THIS POINT IS THAT
GERMANS WOULD NOT BE INCLINED TO PUSH IN THAT DIRECTION
UNLESS THEY FELT THAT THE CONSULTATION PROCESS HAS NOT
TAKEN APPROPRIATE ACCOUNT OF THEIR OWN SPECIFIC
INTERESTS. WE CANNOT, OF COURSE, BE CERTAIN THAT THIS
WILL LAST ONCE THE GERMANS BECOME MORE FAMILIAR WITH
THE ISSUES AND MORE PRECISELY AWARE OF HOW THOSE ISSUES
COULD AFFECT THEM. END COMMENT.
STOESSEL

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